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February 16, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Boehner and Minority Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the world's largest general scientific society, representing the interests of ten million scientists worldwide, I am writing to urge you to sustain funding for federal research and development (R&D). AAAS recognizes the seriousness that our nation's deficit poses to our economic strength; however, we are concerned over the implications of proposed budgetary reductions that are contained in the current legislative proposals for the FY 2011 Continuing Resolution (H.R. 1). While we appreciate your continued recognition and support for defense R&D the proposed decreases for nondefense R&D would have a detrimental impact to many federal agencies. These potential cuts would severely damage America's scientific enterprise and its productivity, and thus would have serious consequences for the nation's future competitiveness. Historically, and despite the severe constraints imposed by deficit reduction efforts in previous years, federal funding for basic research has traditionally enjoyed strong bipartisan support in the U.S. Congress, and we hope this trend will be maintained.

History has shown that a strong science and technology enterprise has been responsible for much of the United States' economic growth since World War II. This fact underscores the AAAS belief that, in order to promote economic growth and keep the United States at the forefront of technological development, it is necessary to maintain sustainable budgets for fundamental and multidisciplinary research across multiple agencies. We urge you to continue to nurture a prosperous future by supporting federal investments in defense and non-defense R&D.

Sincerely,

Alan I. Leshner